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INTRODUCTION

- The first sentence of paragraph 1 of the complaint is prefatory language 1. and does not state any fact that is pertinent to, or an element of, a cause of action, and no response is required. The second sentence is denied.
- Deny that the road extension will traverse Berners Bay or the Lynn Canal. 2. Deny that the entire area has been specifically identified by Congress as deserving special protection, but admit that certain land on the east side of Berners Bay has a congressional designation. It is not clear exactly what "[t]hat area" encompasses, or what is meant by "outstanding natural resources," and therefore those allegations are denied, but admit that natural resources will be impacted by the project as discussed in the FEIS. Admit that certain old-growth forest exists, but unable to admit or deny whether such amount is "significant," and admit that many species of wildlife exist.
- Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to 3. form a belief as to the truth of how plaintiff organizations use the area. No admission or denial necessary regarding the plaintiffs' description of the types of relief sought.

JURISDICTION, RIGHT OF ACTION, VENUE

The allegations in paragraph 4 are conclusions of law, and the statutory 4. citations speak for themselves.

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5. The allegations in paragraph 5 are conclusions of law, and the statutory citation speaks for itself.

PLAINTIFFS

- Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to 6. form a belief as to the truth regarding facts about the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council.
- Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to 7. form a belief as to the truth regarding facts about the Skagway Marine Access Commission.
- Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to 8. form a belief as to the truth regarding facts about the Lynn Canal Conservation, Inc.
- Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to 9. form a belief as to the truth regarding facts about the Alaska Public Interest Research Group.
- Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to 10. form a belief as to the truth regarding facts about the Sierra Club.
- Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to 11. form a belief as to the truth regarding facts about the Natural Resources Defense Council.

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	12.	Intervenor	defendant	is	without	knowledge	or	informati	ion	suffici	ent	to
form a	belief	as to the tru	uth regardin	ng	facts abo	out plaintiff	org	anization	me	mbers'	use	01
uses o	f areas	subject to th	nis lawsuit.									

- Admit that most of the plaintiff organizations participated, without 13. admitting or denying whether such participation was "active." APIRG did not submit comments during scoping or in response to the SDEIS or FEIS. NRDC only submitted comments on the SDEIS. No comments have been received from an entity called "Skagway Marine Access Commission," although comments were received from a similar named entity, the "Skagway Marine Access Committee."
- 14. Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth regarding the impact of defendants' actions on plaintiff organizations, on the plaintiff organizations' general activities, or on their members. Deny that defendants have violated any laws.

DEFENDANTS

Admit that the Federal Highway Administration is an agency of the 15. United States Department of Transportation. The remainder of the paragraph is denied except to the extent of recognizing that safety, security and environmental impact are factors that either can, or do, play a part in most road construction or maintenance, but only in accordance with the law and facts specific to each project or road.

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16.

Admit.

4	17.	Admit.	
5	18.	Admit.	
6	19.	Admit.	
7	20.	Admit.	
8	21.	Admit.	
9	22.	Admit.	
10		FACTS	
12	23.	The first sentence is denied because Juneau	has a National Highway
13	System rout	e within its boundaries. The remainder of the para	graph is admitted.
14	24.	Admit sentences one through three. Deny that	t the Lynn Canal route is
15	"lucrative."	Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or	information sufficient to
16 17	form a beli	ef as to the truth regarding a relative comparis-	on of costs and revenues
18	according to	route.	
19	25.	Admit the first sentence except to note that the	planned route terminates
20	north of the	e Katzehin River delta. Admit that passengers v	vould board the proposed
21	shuttle ferri	es, but deny to the extent the sentence ignores the	proposed vehicular use of
22	the shuttle	ferries. Admit daily proposed shuttle ferry dep	artures, but deny that the
23	departures a	re limited to between 8 am and 8 pm.	
24	1		
25		VENOR'S ANSWER TO COMPLAINT ATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF	Page 5 of 26
26	SEACC, et al. v		Case No. J06-00009CV (JWS)

- Admit first two sentences. The final three sentences are denied because 26. state funding is projected only.
 - 27. Deny.

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Admit except to the extent that the paragraph implies that travel will be 28. stopped for more than thirty days per year.

Recreation and Wildlife Values

- Admit that most of the road will be through an inventoried roadless area, 29. but note that approximately eight miles of the road will be over private land. Admit that the inventoried road area is generally unmodified and natural. Admit that scoring under the United State Forest Service Wilderness Attribute Rating System is high, but otherwise deny the allegations in the final sentence.
- Admit, except that intervenor defendant is without knowledge or 30. information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth regarding whether the habitat is "important" for "hundreds" of species and, if so, in what respects.
 - Admit. 31.
- Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to 32. form a belief as to the truth regarding whether tens of millions of eulachon gather every spring and make a spawning run, or as to the scope or specific species intended by the "abundant array of wildlife" reference. Admit the final sentence.

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33.	Admit the first and second sentences.	Deny that the specific Berners Bay
area has bee	n designated a Scenic Byway because t	he designation belongs to the entire
Alaska Mari	ne Highway System corridor, and Berne	ers Bay is not a part of that corridor.

- Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information Admit. 34. sufficient to form a belief as to the truth regarding the number of acres designating the Berners Bay LUD II area.
- Deny that Berners Bay and Lynn Canal are easily accessible from Juneau, 35. Haines and Skagway. Admit sentences two and three, however without admitting either the precise level of use, or whether the use is "extensive," or whether the area is uniformly "treasured."
- 36. Admit that the area would be changed, but deny a "dramatic" change. Deny the second sentence because it fails to distinguish between forest habitat and terrestrial habitat. Deny the third sentence, except to the extent of an impact upon apparent naturalness.
- This paragraph purports to characterize the project as described in the 37. FEIS and ROD. These documents speak for themselves, and are the best evidence of the contents. Any allegations contrary to the plain language of the FEIS or ROD are denied.

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The Planning Process

- Admit that improving access to Juneau has been debated and has proven 38. contentious. Deny that a majority of residents in the three communities most affected do not support it.
- Admit that of 11,799 votes cast in Juneau during the year 2000, 5,840 39. residents indicated a preference for ferry service and 5,761 preferred a road. The second and third sentences are admitted.
 - 40. Admit.

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- Admit, except to note that the new terminal under Alternative 4, Options 41. B and D, would be at Sawmill Cove, not Sawmill Creek.
 - 42. Deny.
- Admit that Governor Murkowski took office in 2002. Work on the EIS 43. was ordered completed, not reinitiated. The last sentence is denied.
- Admit that in January, 2005, the DOT and FHWA issued a Supplemental 44. Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), and that Alternative 2 was identified as the preferred alternative. Admit that four alternatives with a highway on the east side of Lynn Canal, a west-side of Lynn Canal, and four marine alternatives were evaluated, but deny evaluation of anything called "all marine" options in the SDEIS. Deny that the No Action Alternative did not contemplate use of existing assets more effectively. The

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SDEIS specifically stated that No Action language was used instead of No Build to reflect that "AMHS has and would continue to implement new actions in the Lynn Canal corridor," but would not encompass actions contained in the build alternatives.

- 45. Admit the first and second sentences. The last two sentences are denied because Alternative 2B extends north of the Katzehin River delta, and vehicles as well as passengers would be allowed to board ferries.
- Denied to the extent that "options" means something different from 46. Alternatives. Admit that Alternatives 2, 2A and 2C were determined not reasonable. Deny that any element of the Klondike National Historical Park was within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) of the alternatives. Admit the final sentence.
- 47. Admit that on January 18, 2006, DOT&PF and the FHWA issued the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Deny the second sentence because seven alternatives were analyzed. Deny the third sentence because the No Action Alternative is not a mere continuation of current ferry service, and the FEIS describes No Action as "including" a continuation of mainline service but with the projection that AMHS would be implementing reduced mainline service from Juneau, and adding shuttle service between Haines and Skagway. Admit Alternative 3 requires construction of a highway on the west side of Lynn Canal, and that the alternative was deemed unreasonable in the 1997 DEIS. (DEIS at 3-1 through 3-4.) Deny that four "marine"

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options exist. Four marine alternatives exist (4A, 4B, 4C, 4D). Two of the marine alternatives would end in Sawmill Cove, not Sawmill Creek. The general descriptions of the marine alternatives are admitted.

- Admit the first sentence. Deny that the No Action Alternative in the FEIS 48. reflects a continuation of current service. The No Action Alternative included changes in service that occurred during the preparation of the SDEIS and included projections of future AMHS service changes.
- Deny that using existing Alaska Marine Highway System assets to optimize service in Lynn Canal was raised as an alternative in comments to the SDEIS, or that DOT and the FHWA refused to consider alternatives presented. Admit that the issue was raised in response to comments to the FEIS, but note that the issue was addressed in an addendum to the Record of Decision.
- Admit the total number of comments, but deny that twenty-six comments 50. accurately gauges road support since, among other reasons, Alternative 2B was just one of several road alternatives.
 - 51. Admit.
- Admit the first sentence. The second sentence is denied because the 52. FHWA authorized the expenditure of funds in August, 1994, for preparing an

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environmental document. The April, 2006, authorization was to complete plans, specifications and estimates (PS&E) as well as to appraise and acquire right-of-way.

- Admit the first sentence. Deny that all permits need to be issued before 53. construction can begin as FHWA stated that construction could begin in Zones 1 and 3 (Echo Cove to Antler River, and Lace River to Sweeney Creek, could begin as soon as permits for those areas were issued) before all permits are received Zone 2.
- Admit, but at the time of filing this Answer the bid opening date has been 54. changed to October 31, 2006.

Old-Growth Habitat

- Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to 55. form a belief as to the truth regarding the allegations in paragraph 55.
- Sentences one, three and four discuss requirements of the National Forest 56. Management Act and the Tongass Land Management Plan. These documents and legal provisions speak for themselves, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the documents or legal provisions. Unable to admit or deny when the Tongass Land Management Plan was implemented, but admit that plan was approved in 1997.
- Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to 57. form a belief as to the truth regarding whether the primary wildlife conservation

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strategy implemented by the Forest Service in TLMP is a system of reserves protecting a limited amount of old-growth habitat throughout the forest.

- 58. Paragraph 58 discussed provisions of the Tongass Land Management Plan. The provisions contained therein, including Land Use Designations, speak for themselves, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the TLMP. Admit generally that the TLMP contains Land Use Designations which guides natural resource decision making by establishing management standards and guidelines for a variety of activities, including a designation called "Old-Growth Habitat."
- Paragraph 59 discussed Old-Growth Habitat LUD provisions of the 59. Tongass Land Management Plan. The Land Use Designation OG, Old-Growth Habitat, provisions of the TLMP speak for themselves, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the TLMP. Deny that road construction is barred in the Old-Growth Habitat LUD or is necessarily inconsistent with Old-Growth Habitat goals.
- 60. Paragraph 60 discussed Transportation and Utility Systems LUD provisions of the Tongass Land Management Plan, and the interaction of that LUD with other LUDs. Intervenor defendant admits that a Land Use Designation called "Transportation and Utility Systems" exist within the TLMP, and that the TLMP

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identifies several Transportation and Utility System corridors. The Land Use Designation TUS, Transportation and Utility Systems, provisions of the TLMP speak for themselves, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the TLMP as applied to the LUD TUS, or its interaction with other LUDs.

- Admit that the proposed highway route will cross old-growth reserve 61. areas, but deny that construction will result in a violation of the TLMP either as to oldgrowth reserves or to Old-Growth Habitat LUDs.
- Paragraph 62 alleges when and under what circumstances construction 62. through an Old Growth Habitat LUD area may occur under the Tongass Land Management Plan. The provisions of the TLMP speak for themselves, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the TLMP.
- Paragraph 63 describes the content of a letter dated May 4, 2006, written 63. by the FHWA and submitted to the USDA Forest Service pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 317. The letter dated May 4, 2006, is the best evidence of its contents. Allegations contrary to the plain language of the letter are denied.
- Paragraph 64 describes the contents of a letter dated May 22, 2006, 64. written by the USDA Forest Service and submitted to the FHWA. The letter dated May

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22, 2006, is the best evidence of its contents. Allegations contrary to the plain language of the letter are denied.

Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to 65. form a belief as to the truth regarding the specific Forest Service evaluation process or conclusions regarding feasible alternatives to the proposed road.

Stellar Sea Lions

66. Admit.

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- 67. Sentences 1, 2, 4 and 5 purport to characterize critical habitat identified in 50 C.F.R. 226.202 for Stellar sea lions. The provisions of 50 C.F.R. 226.202 speak for themselves and are the best evidence of their content. Intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the regulation. Admit that two haulouts exist in the vicinity of the project, but deny the remaining allegations of the third sentence.
- The allegations in paragraph 68 purport to characterize project specific details which are documented in the FEIS and ROD. Any allegations contrary to the plain language of those documents are denied.
- 69. Admit a potential effect, except that the sentence is denied to the extent that it implies any adverse effects are likely from noise or human access from construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed highway.

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70).	Deny the first sentence because of	defendants have determined the project	et is
not likel	y to	adversely affect Steller sea lions.	The second sentence cannot be admit	tted
or denied	d bed	cause it is not clear what "human a	activity" is being referenced.	

- The allegations in paragraph 71 purport to characterize the Revised 71. Biological Assessment and letter of concurrence (NMFS September 27, 2005, letter). These documents speak for themselves. Any allegations contrary to the plain language of those documents are denied.
- In response to allegations in the first sentence, admit only that construction plans have not been developed or submitted to NMFS, and deny all remaining allegations of the first sentence. Deny the second sentence both because it is vague in not defining what a "full assessment" is, and because the National Marine Fisheries Service concluded based on existing mitigation measures, including review of construction plans, that the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect Stellar sea lions. The allegations in paragraph 72 of the Complaint appear to be derived from the September 27, 2005, NMFS letter. The provisions of the NMFS September 27, 2005, letter speak for themselves, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the letter.

73. Deny.

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- Admit that concurrence in the Revised Biological Assessment 75. determination was sought by DOT and the FHWA, but otherwise deny the first sentence. As to the remaining allegations, the NFMS September 27, 2005, letter speaks for itself, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the letter.
- Admit that additional mitigation measures broadened the monitoring 76. program, but deny the remainder of paragraph 76. To the extent paragraph 76 of the Complaint relies on the NMFS September 27, 2005, letter, the provisions of the NMFS September 27, 2005, letter speak for themselves, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the letter.
- Admit that additional mitigation measures were accepted, and deny that 77. boat access measures were rejected. Admit that one of the additional mitigation

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measures requested by NMFS was "[n]o boat launches or structures that enhance boat access will be constructed by DOT&PF as part of the East Lynn Canal Highway," but deny remainder of the second sentence. Admit that DNR has authority to grant permits or easements for use of tidelands in the state instead of DOT. The last sentence is denied.

Deny the first sentence. Admit that NMFS will conduct a limited review 78. of final plans in accordance with the mitigation measures, but deny to the extent the allegation implies that NMFS has blanket approval authority over final plans for construction. Deny that the mitigation measures preclude construction within 3,000 feet of the Gran Point haulout when sea lions are present. To the extent this paragraph of the Complaint relies on the NMFS September 27, 2005, letter, the provisions of the NMFS September 27, 2005, letter speak for themselves, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the letter.

79. Deny.

It is not clear what "strict limits or prohibitions" means, and therefore 80. intervenor defendant denies the first sentence. A mitigation measure may act as a prohibition, or strict prohibition, for example. Admit that portions of mitigation measures numbered 1 and 4 from NMFS September 27, 2005, letter were properly quoted. To the extent this paragraph of the Complaint relies on the NMFS September

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27, 2005, letter, the provisions of the letter speak for themselves, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the letter.

- Deny the first sentence. Deny that the chosen measures are inadequate or 81. impractical. Intervenor defendant is without knowledge or information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth regarding whether the measures "might" ultimately prove ineffective, or whether circumstances "may" make the measures impractical, and therefore deny the allegations.
- Deny first sentence. Admit the remaining sentences except to deny any 82. errors in data resulting from daily monitoring.
 - 83. Deny.
- Admit that a sixty-day letter was submitted as provided in this paragraph, 84. but deny that all plaintiff organizations signed the letter.

Bald Eagles

- The allegations of paragraph 85 purport to characterize the content of the 85. The FEIS speaks for itself, and is the best evidence of its content. Any allegations contrary to the plain language of the FEIS is denied.
- Admit first sentence. Admit that persistent noise may cause individual 86. eagles to abandon a nest, but otherwise deny the second sentence.

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- 87. Admit the first sentence and deny the second sentence. The FEIS only concludes that individual eagle pairs may relocate.
 - 88. Admit the first two sentences, and deny the final sentence.
- 89. In response to the allegations of paragraph 89, intervenor defendant admits and avers that no statute or regulatory requirement exists for obtaining a permit or other approval for the "taking" of bald eagles associated with a proposed highway project.

Traffic Demand

- 90. The allegations in sentences 1, 3 and 4 are denied. Admit that an Appendix C exists called the "Traffic Forecast Report," and was prepared for DOT&PF and the FHWA by the McDowell Group with assistance from Kittelson & Associates.
- 91. Sentences 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 are denied. The allegations contained in the fourth sentence are admitted.
 - 92. Admit first sentence. Deny the remaining sentences.
 - 93. Deny.
 - 94. Deny.
- 95. Admit that the EIS includes a calculation of net present value for each reasonable build alternative, but deny remainder of sentence one. Admit that the net present value calculation is used to compare one calculation of relative costs and

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benefits of alternatives, but deny remainder of sentence two. Admit generally the statements in sentences three, four, five and six, but deny that No Action Alternative had a net present value assigned.

Deny the first sentence. Deny that evidence was presented to the FHWA 96. and DOT in response to the SDEIS. Admit that comments were submitted in response to the FEIS regarding frequency delays, but deny the remainder of the sentence. The final sentence is denied because the ROD addressed the comments.

COUNT I

Failure to Comply with Tongass Land Management Plan

(National Forest Management Act)

- This paragraph does not call for an admission or denial. 97.
- The provisions of the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) speak for 98. themselves, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the NFMA.
- The Tongass Land Management Plan speaks for itself, and intervenor 99. defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the TLMP.
- Intervenor, State of Alaska, lacks sufficient knowledge or information to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations and, therefore, denies the same.

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101. Intervenor, State of Alaska, lacks sufficient knowledge or information to form a belief as to the truth of the allegation and, therefore, denies the same.

Count II

Bald Eagles

- 102. This paragraph does not call for an admission or denial.
- 103. The Bald Eagle Protection Act speaks for itself, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the Bald Eagle Protection Act.
 - 104. Deny.
 - 105. Deny.

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Count III

Failure to Consider Reasonable Alternatives

(National Environmental Policy Act)

- This paragraph does not call for an admission or denial. 106.
- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) speaks for itself, and 107. intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from NEPA.
- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) speaks for itself, and 108. intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from NEPA.
- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) speaks for itself, and 109. intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from NEPA. The second sentence is denied.
- The Title 23, Code of Federal Regulation provisions speak for themselves, intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations.
 - 111. Deny.
 - Deny. 112.

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COUNT IV

Misleading Traffic Demand Forecast

(Department of Transportation Act, Administrative Procedure Act,

National Environmental Policy Act)

- This paragraph does not call for an admission or denial. 113.
- The provisions of 23 U.S.C. §§ 106, 109 speak for themselves, and 114. intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from 23 U.S.C. §§ 106, 109.
 - 115. Deny.

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- 116. Deny.
- 117. Deny.
- Deny the first sentence. The provisions of 40 C.F.R. §§ 1502, 1503 speak for themselves, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from those federal code provisions.
 - 119. Deny.

STATE INTERVENOR'S ANSWER TO COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF SEACC, et al. v. FHWA

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Failure to Initiate Formal Consultation for Steller Sea Lions

(Endangered Species Act, Administrative Procedure Act)

- 120. This paragraph does not call for an admission or denial.
- 121. The ESA speaks for itself, and intervenor defendant denies any allegations, characterizations or conclusions that differ from the ESA.
 - 122. Deny.
 - 123. Admit.
- 124. Admit that the FHWA agreed to implement a series of mitigation measures. Deny the remainder of paragraph 124.
 - 125. Deny.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, the intervenor State of Alaska respectfully requests the following relief:

STATE INTERVENOR'S ANSWER TO COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF SEACC, et al. v. FHWA

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ATTORNEY GENERAL, STATE OF ALASKA

P.O. BOX 110300, JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811 PHONE: 465-3600 DIMOND COURTHOUSE

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1.	That the	Complaint	for	Declaratory	and	Injunctive	Relief be	dismissed
and judgment be entered in favor of defendants;								

- Award the State of Alaska the costs of this action, including reasonable 2. attorneys' fees; and
 - Grant such other relief as this Court deems just and proper. 3.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 19th day of October, 2006.

DAVID W. MÁRQUEZ ATTORNEY GENERAL

By:

/s Peter Putzier

Assistant Attorney General Alaska Bar No. 9311089

State of Alaska Department of Law P.O. Box 110300

Juneau, Alaska 99811-0300 Telephone: (907) 465-3600 Facsimile: (907) 465-6735 peter putzier@law.state.ak.us

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Angela Hobbs, certify that on October 19, 2006, a copy of the foregoing document, was served via e-mail and regular mail to Michael C. LeVine. Courtesy copies were also sent via e-mail and regular mail to United States Attorney Nelson P. Cohen and United States Department of Justice Attorney Dean Dunsmore, and via e-mail to United States Department of Justice Attorney Coby Howell.

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Angela Hobbs, Law Office Assistant

STATE INTERVENOR'S ANSWER TO COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF SEACC, et al. v. FHWA

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